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## TEXAS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

### House Membership

### Representative Sylvester Turner



### Biographical Information

Sylvester Turner, born in 1954, the sixth of nine children, was raised by his father, a commercial painter, and his mother, a maid at the Rice Hotel. Turner showed promise at an early age by becoming valedictorian and senior class president of Klein High School. He later attended the University of Houston where he was Speaker of the Student Senate and graduated Magna Cum Laude. From there he went to Harvard Law School where he was a finalist in the Ames Moot Court Competition.

After graduation from law school in 1980, he became an associate with Fulbright and Jaworski. Presently, he owns his own law firm, Barnes & Turner, and serves as an adjunct professor at the Thurgood Marshall School of Law. He is also a seminar lecturer at the South Texas College of Law and the University of Houston Law School's Continuing Legal Education Programs. Turner is committed to several civic and educational causes which include: the United Negro College Fund, the Acres Home Citizens Chamber of Commerce, the Coalition for School Improvement and the Board of the American Cancer Society.

Turner began his service in the Legislature in 1988 and ran for the Mayor of Houston in 1991. Currently, Representative Turner serves as Vice-Chair of the State Affairs Committee and also as a member of the Calendars Committee and the Appropriations Committee.

Representative Turner has made a career of taking a stand on policies and issues which effect the common citizen. His compassionate insight into reformative issues concerning welfare, education, child care and juvenile justice has raised awareness, and evoked the praise and admiration of his colleagues in the legislature, liberal and conservative alike.

The following list includes a few of the many awards and recognitions that Representative Turner has received: named one of ten among "The Best of the Legislature" of the 77th session by *Hispanic Journal*; honored for the second time in 2001 by the Texas Classroom Teachers as a "Legislative Star" for his work in leading the fight for students and teachers; the "1995 Star of Texas" Award from Common Cause of Texas for his efforts in working for legislation supporting open government; honored as the "conscience of the 74th Legislature" by the Texas Legislative Study Group; received the "1995 Texas House of Representatives Crime Fighters of the Year" Award from the Combined Law Enforcement Associations of Texas; received the Sierra Club's "1995 State Legislative Award" for work in favor of environmental protection.

He is a member of Brookhollow Baptist Church, and the proud father of one child, Ashley Paige Turner.

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